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The News Virginian (p.1)

Expansion Of Tv Cable System Is Planned Here

Plans for the expansion of the Jefferson Cable Corp. system, including the addition of a studio for local programming, were outlined to City Council last night.

The company's plans were described by President R. A. Monroe, who appeared at the meeting to answer a number of complaints which had been posed to city councilmen.

Mr. Monroe informed the governing body that, technically, Jefferson Cable's system is as good as it was five years ago. Some problems, including a devastating ice storm last winter, have been encountered, he said.

To alleviate some complaints such as poor signal quality, Mr. Monroe said that his firm is now in the process of replacing old tube amplifiers with a transistorized system. This, he added, is a slow process.

Commenting on complaints of poor maintenance, Mr. Monroe said his repairmen answer service calls as quickly as possible. He added, however, "Possibly we have a problem of communications with our customers."

Explaining the loss of television Channel 8 to cable users, Mr. Monroe said this was due to a request to the Federal Communications Commission by Harrisonburg Channel 3 that its ABC programs not be duplicated in the Waynesboro area. Both Channel 3 and Channel 8 are ABC affiliates, Mr. Monroe said. The action by Channel 3, however, did not stipulate the removal of Channel 13, which is also an ABC system, he said.

Mr. Monroe suggested that local support for Channel 8 over Channel 3 might persuade the FCC to change its mind on which channel to authorize here.

Outlining future plans of his company, Mr. Monroe said that the cable system will be installed in the Shenandoah Heights area, the last major section of the city without cable service, as soon as the weather breaks.

Beginning in 1970, Mr. Monroe said, the cable system will begin a major origination program here, providing the city with what amounts to a local television station.

He stated that the company will provide a studio here to be used for a wide variety of local programs, including extensive use by local schools.

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In another item, council heard from Robert A. Monroe, president of the Jefferson Cable Corp. Residents have reported to council the firm is not properly maintaining the television cables, resulting in an unclear television picture.

Mr. Monroe told council new transistor amplifiers are being installed and total conversion from tube-type equipment should be finished this winter.

The firm is based in Charlottesville, and a serviceman is living in Waynesboro to insure good operation, he noted.

Mr. Monroe said that by Jan. 1, local television programs may be originated from Waynesboro on the cable.

This could include televising council meetings as well as school events and discussions. Facilities are being readied now, he said, noting it is a "very important public service". He was asked to give council a written proposal for the television programs.

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Improved Cable System Promised

An upgrading of Jefferson Cable Corp. operations here, including the appointment of a resident manager and plans for local programming, was promised last night during the regular meeting of City Council.

Appearing before council was Jefferson Cable President R. A. Monroe, who admitted that his organization has had some problems in the city during recent months. To counter this, Mr. Monroe said, "We are naming a resident manager here, effective Oct. 1, in order to give closer attention to service problems."

The new manager, introduced by Mr. Monroe, will be E. E. Worrell, now working out of the organization's Charlottesville office.

Asked for a timetable on upgrading the amplification phase of the cable system, Mr. Monroe told council that old-type tube amplifiers are now being replaced, and that this phase of the system will be two-thirds completed by next June.

Also, he said, cable service is now being extended into areas such as Shenandoah Heights which have not previously been served.

Responding to a question from Councilman Louis J. Hausrath regarding local programming, Mr. Monroe said that Jefferson Cable is now constructing a studio here for program origination and that the facility is expected to be in service within six months.

He proposed that, beginning in January, regular sessions of city council be broadcast live. To this Mayor J. B. Yount III said, "We would be glad to consider a written proposal."

Members of council asked Mr. Monroe to return in mid-

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January to give them an updated report on accomplishments of the company and plans for the future.